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News Releases and other News Material

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

Remarks-

Release No. 0407.93

Prepared for Delivery by
MIKE ESPY
Secretary of Agriculture
before the International Nut Council
Consejo Internacional de Los Frutos Secos
Athens, Greece

May 24, 1993

I consider it symbolic and fortuitous that we meet here this year --especially this year -- in this beautiful city that was the cradle of western civilization.

I say especially this year because we hope and expect -- and I say that with guarded optimism and the full knowledge that you've heard it before -- we hope and expect that this will be the definitive year of trade accord.

For me, the choice of this site -- this acropolis, or city on a hill --for the Council's Congress of 1993, dramatically underscores the historic, human, and timeless importance of trade.

If Athens was the cradle of western civilization, that civilization was based on trade. Major battles of ancient civilization were waged over control of the trading world -- the Aegean Sea.

It's said that the Athenians put their faith in "wooden walls" -- their fleet -- to protect them from Persian forces.

Today, the "wooden walls" or ships that are symbolic of each nation's self-interests can no longer be a safe haven as we chart our passage toward a new century and a global marketplace.

Today I would like to talk with you about that global marketplace and President Clinton's trade policy.

The Clinton Trade Policy

One American historian recently said that:

"We are at one of those rare points of leverage in history when familiar constraints have dropped away; what we do now could establish the framework within which events will play themselves out for decades to come."

It's with this deep sense of both the moment and the weight that this moment will carry through history that President Clinton is forming his trade agenda.

I bring you a message today from Washington. And that message echoes the words that President Clinton used to open his State of the Union 1993:

"Nations, like individuals, must ultimately decide how they wish to conduct themselves -- how they wish to be thought of by those with whom they live, and, later, how they wish to be judged by history. Like every man and woman, they must decide whether they are prepared to rise to the occasions history presents them."

What does this mean for the U.S. approach to trade under the Clinton Administration?

This Administration's trade policy is an extension of its economic policy. It centers on the understanding that our national prosperity and the economic future of our children depend on our ability to compete in the global marketplace.

For the United States, agricultural prosperity depends on exports. The crop production from three out of every ten U.S. acres is sold to consumers in other countries. One-fifth of the value of our total agricultural output is exported each year.

Tree Nut Trade

I made this journey to Athens for two reasons: to recognize the importance of trade to the tree nut industry and to salute the contribution that tree nut trade makes to the U.S. and global economies.

The U.S. is the world's leading almond, walnut, pecan, and macadamia nut producer. Iran is the world's leading producer of pistachios, followed by the U.S. The U.S. also produces a significant amount of hazelnuts.

U.S. exports of domestically-grown tree nuts totaled \$922 million in 1992. Our USDA data shows that the U.S. almond industry sold the equivalent of 77 percent of its crop in foreign markets in 1991-92. For pistachios, that number was 64 percent. For walnuts -- 38 percent. And for hazelnuts -- 36 percent.

I congratulate these U.S. industries on these record-setting export levels. We expect that U.S. pistachio and hazelnut exports will set records again this year.

The United States, as you know, is also a major import market for the tropical nuts. Our imports of coconut, brazil nuts, and cashews totaled \$334 million in 1992, up 10 percent from 1991.

Uruguay Round

It's precisely this kind of stake held by our American farm industries in international trade that drives our efforts to complete the Uruguay Round of GATT. As you know, no previous round has been as important to U.S. agriculture, or as difficult to negotiate.

This Administration sees the Uruguay Round as just the start of the process of reforming world trade for agriculture. Overall, a Uruguay Round agreement is expected to increase world economic growth by 1/2 percent per year and add more than \$100 billion annually to the global economy. I want you to know that we are making every effort to reach a fair and workable GATT agreement.

Toward that end, the Administration has asked Congress for a renewal of the Fast Track negotiating authority to give us until December 15, 1993 to reach a good agreement.

Just two weeks ago, I returned from my first overseas trip as Secretary. I met with my European counterparts -- Agriculture Minister Westh in Copenhagen, Minister Bourgeois in Brussels, Minister Gummer in London and Commissioner Steichen (Sty-ken) of the European Community -- to discuss GATT and other trade issues.

Our discussions were frank, open and productive, but I kept emphasizing one key point:

"We're on the right track, but we're not there yet. We still need substantial discussion on the very complicated issue of market access."

Japan and Korea have not yet agreed to open their markets for many commodities, most importantly, rice. And the U.S. is still not satisfied with the market access offer of the European Community.

The nut trade would benefit from a good agreement on market access. Countries would not be able to use arbitrary measures -- such as restrictive licensing or import bans -- to protect their domestic industries. Instead, protection would only be allowed through ordinary tariffs. This would open markets for exporters, lower costs, and increase the available supply for importers.

Other issues being negotiated under the Draft Final Act include export competition, internal support, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures. Preventing use of unjustified health-related measures as disguised barriers to trade would benefit the nut trade.

It's clear to all of us that the issues yet to resolve are complex. We're hopeful, nonetheless, that the Uruguay Round will move quickly and an agreement will be signed by the end of the year.

North American Free Trade Agreement

Although free trade hasn't earned a place in the history books, arguments pro and con certainly have.

Some one-hundred-and-fifty years ago -- so the story goes -- a French economist and pamphleteer, Frederick Bastiat, wrote about candlemakers seeking protection against the unfair competition of the sun.

Turning to more recent and recorded history -- since the end of World War II, the world has moved toward global trading as the benefits of open markets became clear.

The most current and dramatic scenario has played out in Eastern Europe. Emerging from 45 years under communism's grip, the nations of Eastern Europe are opening their economies to achieve western-style prosperity.

Along with GATT, NAFTA shares front-and-center attention from the Administration among international concerns.

The Clinton Administration supports NAFTA, with supplemental "side agreements" on labor, the environment, and import surges. Mexico and Canada still question some of these agreements, but we've made progress and are optimistic about the negotiations.

The Administration hopes to pass and implement NAFTA by January 1, 1994 under fast-track procedures.

Our USDA economists have done some analyses of what trade would be like with NAFTA in place.

After the 15-year NAFTA transition period, annual U.S. agricultural exports would probably be \$2.0 to \$2.5 billion higher than without NAFTA. And Mexican agricultural exports to the U.S. would increase by \$500 to \$600 million annually.

Mexico is already the fastest growing major export market for U.S. farm exports -- a record \$3.8 billion in 1992. U.S. tree nut sales to Mexico have soared in recent years -- a record \$28 million in 1992. And Mexico is virtually the United States' only foreign supplier of pecans.

What impact, then, would NAFTA have on the tree nut trade?

First, all Mexican and U.S. tariffs on tree nuts would be eliminated immediately.

And second, we expect that NAFTA would moderately increase U.S. exports of almonds, hazelnuts, pistachios and walnuts to Mexico. U.S. imports of Mexican pecans would be marginally higher.

Methyl Bromide

To my American friends -- and to representatives of countries who import their production -- I'd like to say a word about methyl bromide.

Methyl bromide -- widely used as a soil fumigant since the 1970's and 80's and the only broad-spectrum fumigant satisfactory for fresh commodities -- is in trouble. Widespread public concern about the environmental effects of its continued use are leading to its ban for all uses in the United States.

Loss of methyl bromide would greatly hurt U.S. agricultural exports. Especially hurt would be U.S. exports to Japan. Japan requires that almonds and walnuts, among other commodities, be fumigated with methyl bromide before entry.

There are, it's true, some alternative chemicals available for some agricultural needs -- but these are less effective. The simple fact is that at the moment there are no non-chemical alternatives that control soilborne and post-harvest plant pathogens and pests as effectively.

I wish I could offer you a panacea to this problem. What I can offer is our recognition of your need, and the assurance that our Agricultural Research Service is working on alternatives to methyl bromide. We're devoting about one-quarter of ARS resources for quarantine research to this purpose.

This is, I acknowledge, a time-consuming process. I cannot guarantee that alternative methods will be in place before -- or if -- methyl bromide is withdrawn. But I do want you to know that in Washington we hear you, we understand the significance of this situation to your export trade, and we're working toward alternatives.

Conclusion

I want to conclude by congratulating the International Nut Council for the very premise on which it was founded -- bringing together business leaders from around the world to exchange information on production and trade.

When the original Olympics first took place here in Athens 2500 years ago, the idea was to take time out from war, and assemble citizens from all of the city-states for a celebration of peace and harmony.

When the Frenchman -- Coubertine -- revived the modern-day Olympics in 1896, the idea was much the same: to bring together participants from every country of the world to celebrate the individual and the human spirit in cooperation.

History has dealt us a singular moment. As walls crumble and freedom spreads, it's within the realm of those of us involved in trade to work together to shape the emerging global economy. What we're really doing, ladies and gentlemen, is establishing the framework for trade well into the next century.

That's a mighty charge and I'm proud to take it on with all of you.



News Releases-

Release No. 0408.93
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CATALOG SIMPLIFIES SEARCH FOR WEAPONS AGAINST CROP PESTS

WASHINGTON, May 25--Life's about to become a little riskier for crop-gobbling insects now that finding just the right fungus to fend off the pests has been simplified.

As farm chemical use is reduced or, in some cases, eliminated, demand for natural control agents such as fungi is increasing. At a U.S. Department of Agriculture laboratory in Ithaca, N.Y., approximately 3,400 fungal strains wait to be explored for biocontrol potential--the world's largest collection of fungi that attack invertebrates such as insects, mites, spiders and nematodes.

A 177-page catalog, "Collection of Entomopathogenic Fungal Cultures," helps researchers look for fungi in the collection under the names of pests they attack, the locations where the fungi have been found, or even in other collections. The catalog was published in November by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, and copies are available free of charge.

"This catalog really does serve the biocontrol community," said ARS microbiologist Richard A. Humber, curator of the collection since 1976. "There is no equivalent catalog of information on fungal pathogens of invertebrates anywhere in the world."

A previous catalog issued in 1986 also listed fungi by the pests they attacked and the locations they were found. But Humber said the new catalog's indices are much more detailed.

"For example, in the geographical index of the 1986 catalog, it would just list the country where the fungus originated and that fungus' accession number in our collection," he explained.

"In the new catalog, the geographical index lists the country, then the state or other political entity within the country, then the scientific name of the fungus, and finally the accession number."

Samples of fungal strains can be ordered from Humber. He said he fills 300 to 500 requests each year, many from non-profit laboratories looking for alternatives to chemical control of crop pests, but also for use in teaching or comparison with other strains.

The new catalog's contents are on a computer database, which will simplify corrections and updates, Humber said.

"If anybody wants to know, "What fungi do you have that attack Pest X?", we can not only come back very quickly with a response to that query, but we can come back with the answer as a catalog put together specifically for that person," he said.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Richard A. Humber, Plant Protection Research, USDA, ARS, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853. Telephone (607) 255-1276.

Release No. 0411.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 CROP FLUE-CURED TOBACCO GRADE SUPPORT RATES

WASHINGTON, May 25--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced grade loan rates for the 1993 crop of flue-cured tobacco, based on the price support level of \$1.577 per pound.

The 1993 crop loan rates range from \$1.04 to \$1.92 per pound. The 1992 crop grade loan rate range was \$1.05 to \$1.93 per pound and was based on a price support level of \$1.56 per pound. The 1993 grade loan rates reflect minor adjustments from the 1992 rates due to changes in the level of price support and shifts in the historical average grade distribution.

The Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation will deduct one cent per pound from the grade loan rates for administrative overhead costs.

Loans are not available on flue-cured tobacco identified by a 1993 Tobacco Marketing Card bearing the notation "No Price Support" or "Discount Variety-No Price Support."

For tobacco identified by a 1993 Tobacco Marketing Card bearing the notation "Discount Variety-Limited Support," the applicable rates are one-half of the rates quoted in the schedule, plus 50 cents per hundred pounds. Any grade to which the special factor "sand" or "dirt" is added (denoting a moderate amount of sand or dirt in excess of normal) may be accepted at 90 percent, rounded to the nearest cent, of the rate listed in the attached schedule.

Also, loans are unavailable on tobacco graded P5L, P5F, P5G, N1L, N1GL, N1XL, N1XO, N1PO, NO-G (no grade), N2 (second quality nondescript), W (doubtful keeping order), U (unsound), or scrap. However, marketings of these low grades will be charged against the quotas of the farms on which they were produced.

1993 CROP FLUE-CURED TOBACCO PRICE SUPPORT SCHEDULE

GRADE	LOAN		LOAN		LOAN
	RATE	GRADE	RATE	GRADE	
(cents per pound farm sales weight)					
B1L	192	B3KF	170	C1L	179
B2L	190	B4KF	166	C2L	177
B3L	187	B5KF	156	C3L	174
B4L	184	B6KF	149	C4L	168
B5L	178			C5L	162
B6L	174	B3KK	169		
		B4KK	163	C1F	179
B1F	192	B5KK	154	C2F	177
B2F	190	B6KK	145	C3F	174
B3F	187			C4F	168
B4F	185	B5R	151	C5F	162
B5F	178				
B6F	174	B4KV	160	C4KR	161
		B5KV	150		
B1FR	191	B6KV	141	C4V	159
B2FR	188			C4KM	158
B3FR	186	B3KD	167	C4S	156
B4FR	184	B4KD	159		
B5FR	177	B5KD	147	C4KL	155
B6FR	173	B6KD	139	C4KF	155
				C4KK	154
B3K	183	B4G	153		
B4K	181	B5G	145	C4LL	148
B5K	173	B6G	137	C5LL	142
B6K	163				
		B4GK	151	C4G	144
		B5GK	144	C4GK	139

B3KR	182	B6GK	134	C5LP	135
B4KR	177				
B5KR	167	B5GR	130	C5FP	135
				X1L	172
B3V	178	B5GG	125	X2L	165
B4V	172			X3L	160
B5V	165	H3F	187	X4L	149
		H4F	185	X5L	136
B3KM	176	H5F	178		
B4KM	171	H6F	174	X1F	172
B5KM	164			X2F	165
B6KM	153	H4FR	184	X3F	160
		H5FR	177	X4F	149
B3S	171	H6FR	173	X5F	136
B4S	165				
B5S	158	H4K	181	X3KR	156
		H5K	173	X4KR	148
B3KL	170	H6K	163		
B4KL	166			X3V	154
B5KL	156			X4V	145
B6KL	149				

GRADE	LOAN RATE	GRADE	LOAN RATE	GRADE	LOAN RATE
X3KM	148	P2L	147	M4KM	134
X4KM	139	P3L	137	M5KM	129
		P4L	133		
X3S	147			M4GK	123
X4S	137	P2F	147	M5GK	117
		P3F	137		
X4KL	134	P4F	133	N1K	128
X4KF	134			N1R	123
		P4G	117		
X3LL	139			N1GF	110
X4LL	133	M4F	148	N1GR	111
X4KV	130	M5F	137	N1KV	114
				N1GG	104
X4G	130	M4KR	135	N1BO	115
X5G	125				
X4GK	128				



Release No. 0412.93
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PEPPER REQUESTS TOO HOT TO HANDLE

CHARLESTON, S.C., May 26--U.S. Vegetable Laboratory officials here said today they no longer can fill seed requests for the new Charleston Hot cayenne pepper.

"Our supply of seed is exhausted," said Claude Thomas, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture lab operated by the Agricultural Research Service.

He said the lab has filled more than 24,000 requests for seed, substituting seed from a sister pepper, Carolina Cayenne, when Charleston Hot supplies ran out.

Thomas said Charleston Hot seed will be available commercially in 1994 from South Carolina Foundation Seed, Inc., Clemson University, 1162 Cherry Road, Clemson, S.C. 29631. "But please don't contact them until January of next year," Thomas said.

Scientists Philip D. Dukes and Richard L. Fery developed Charleston Hot, released last October after a decade of research. The variety is one of the hottest, spiciest cayenne peppers available--about 20 times hotter than a jalapeno, Dukes said. It is also resistant to the southern root knot nema-tode.

"We never envisioned the number of requests we would get after we announced last February that the seed was available," Dukes said.

The news release (USDA News Release 0135.93) and a story in the agency's Agricultural Research magazine led to news coverage about the pepper. Dukes said the lab had contacts from 28 newspapers and magazines, 45 radio stations, and 10 television stations from the United States and around the world.

Filling written requests actually wasn't the hardest part. "It was the phone calls that got us--sometimes we'd get hundreds when an article came out with our phone number in it," he said.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: *For details, contact Philip D. Dukes, Richard L. Fery or Claude Thomas, U.S. Vegetable Laboratory, USDA, ARS, Charleston, S.C. 29414-5334; telephone (803) 556-0840. (Editors: Phone lab if you have questions, but the lab requests that you not publish its telephone number.)*

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Release No. 0416.93
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USDA PROTECTS 30 NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, May 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of 30 new varieties of seed-reproduced plants including alfalfa, barley, bean, Kentucky bluegrass, cauliflower, lentil, lettuce, oat, pea, wheat and durum wheat.

Kenneth H. Evans, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

- the Cimarron VR variety of alfalfa, developed by Thaddeus H. Busbice, Apex, N.C.;
- the 5151, 5252, 5311, 5715 and Capital varieties of alfalfa, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa;
- the Chopper variety of barley, developed by the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis.;
- the B1215 and B1614 varieties of barley, developed by Busch Agricultural Resources Inc., Ft. Collins, Colo.;
- the Blackhawk and Sierra varieties of bean, developed by the Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.;
- the Avanti and Anchor varieties of bean, developed by the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.;
- the Opal variety of Kentucky bluegrass, developed by W. Weibull AB, Landskrona, Sweden;
- the Blizzard variety of cauliflower, developed by the Rogers NK Seed Co., Boise, Idaho;

--the Snowcone variety of cauliflower, developed by the Ferry-Morse Seed Co., San Juan Bautista, Calif.;
--the Lolita variety of lentil, developed by the Wilbur Ellis Co., Seattle, Wash.,
--the Two Star variety of lettuce, developed by Brinker Orsetti Seed Co. Inc., Hollister, Calif.;
--the Premier variety of oat, developed by the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, St. Paul, Minn.;
--the Delsey variety of pea, developed by the Rogers NK Seed Co., Boise, Idaho;
--the Lazor variety of pea, developed by the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.;
--the Coker 9877 variety of wheat, developed by the Northrup King Co., Washington, Iowa;
--the Longhorn variety of wheat, developed by AgriPro Biosciences Inc., Shawnee Mission, Kan.;
--the Howell variety of wheat, developed by the University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.;
--the Verne variety of wheat, developed by the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, Lexington, Ky.;
--the 2571, 2580 and 2737W varieties of wheat, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Windfall, Ind.; and
--the Reva and Duraking varieties of durum wheat, developed by the Farmers Marketing Corp., Phoenix, Ariz.

The certificates of protection for the Chopper, B1215 and B1614 barley varieties, the Blackhawk and Sierra field bean varieties, the Opal Kentucky bluegrass variety, the Premier oat variety, the Coker 9877, Longhorn, Howell and Verne wheat varieties and the Reva and Duraking durum wheat varieties are being issued for sale by variety name only as a class of certified seed and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The AMS administers the plant variety protection program which provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seed-reproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.



Release No. 0417.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES FOOD SAFETY OFFENSIVES

WASHINGTON, May 27--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced the results of a special review of slaughter houses nationwide and plans to require every U.S. meat and poultry plant to meet new strict production standards.

"I want to see tough new safety standards, and I expect to see them enforced," Espy said today during a news conference at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The decision to move forward with specific new food safety initiatives, Espy said, "was necessary to modernize and revolutionize an archaic system that must do a better job of protecting consumers."

"We cannot continue to run a system based on 1933 standards and procedures in 1993."

During the news conference, Espy reported the results of a special review of 90 beef slaughter plants and outlined five new initiatives to improve meat inspection.

Results of the USDA special review, which was conducted in response to the E. coli outbreak this winter, showed that 30 of 90 plants were ordered to temporarily shut down to clean up operations. Twelve of the 90 plants were placed under a special enforcement program in which continuing non-compliance would result in the withdrawal of federal inspection.

"We will not settle for the status quo in meat inspection and I hope that the special review sends a clear message that we are serious about strict meat inspection enforcement," said Espy.

In addition to the results of the special review, Espy announced the following five initiatives to upgrade meat inspection:

*The publication of regulations that will mandate a process for the industry installation of a Hazard Analysis and Critical Point (HACCP) system. An HACCP system identifies critical points that must be controlled to prevent hazards from occurring.

*The continuation of special in-plant reviews on an expanded basis to include all meat and poultry products and to quarterly report the results to the Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Inspection Service with an explanation of the corrective actions ordered by the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

*The publication of a statement in the Federal Register within the next 60 days that specifies the criteria that the Inspection Service needs for rapid microbiological in-plant tests.

*The inclusion of a public health advisor in the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

*The preparation of a proposal for the secretary's consideration of needed changes in the inspection laws. The proposal is due to the secretary within 30 days of the final meat inspection regional hearing scheduled for June 18 in Philadelphia. (The other hearings either have been or will be: May 21, Dallas; June 2, Seattle; June 4, Des Moines, Iowa; June 9, Oakland, Calif; and June 11, Atlanta.) It is anticipated the proposed changes would include expansion of the department's authority to require identification of animals entering the slaughter house for more effective trace back from the processing plants to the farm.

Also at the news conference, a report was released detailing the investigation of the E.coli outbreak in the West earlier this year. The report outlined an investigation to find the source of the E.coli. The report says that USDA officials have narrowed down the source to nine possible plants.

Espy said that the system must be changed to improve trace back and he said that many of his initiatives will take steps in that direction.

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Release No. 0418.93
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IF INSECTS RESIST ONE Bt STRAIN, TRY ANOTHER

WASHINGTON, May 27--Insect pests that are resistant to one type of a natural insecticide called Bt may be vulnerable to other strains of the insecticide, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have found.

Bt--the soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*--has been used for 30 years as an alternative to chemical insecticides. When sprayed on crops, the Bt's natural toxins kill insect pests, but do not harm humans, animals, beneficial insects or the crops.

Now, studies at the U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory at Manhattan, Kan., show that Indianmeal moths resistant to the toxins in some types of Bt may still fall prey to toxins found in other Bt types.

USDA microbiologist Donovan E. Johnson said the results suggest that "using more than one type of Bt with different toxins may at least hinder the development of resistance." He is based at the Agricultural Research Service's Manhattan lab.

Johnson did the study with entomologist William H. McGaughey, who first noted Bt resistance in a crop pest in 1985. Indianmeal moths were subjected in the new tests to five different Bt types, some which are commercially available.

After 20 generations, the insects' resistance to the most widely used commercial version of Bt had increased 300-fold, Johnson reported. Resistance to other types of Bt increased 20-fold to 100-fold.

Moths seemed to build resistance more slowly toward Bt strains that produce a more complex array of toxins, he said. In these instances, the moths had a tendency to also be resistant to most other strains of Bt.

On the other hand, Indianmeal moths resistant to a Bt strain that produced a narrow range of toxins exhibited little resistance to other Bt strains. Johnson said this type of resistance may be controlled by switching to another Bt strain.

Other ways for farmers to overcome--or at least delay--pest resistance, he said, include using mixtures or sequences of Bt toxins, rotating the toxins and varying the toxin dosage as part of an integrated pest management system.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: *For details, contact Donovan E. Johnson, U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory, USDA, ARS, Manhattan, Kan. 66502. Telephone (913) 776-2724.*

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Release No. 0419.93
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NAL NAMES FIRST PRIVATE FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

WASHINGTON, May 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library has selected American Farmland Trust (AFT) to operate the nation's first Farmland Information Center.

AFT, a national farmland conservation group based here in Washington, D.C., will work with NAL's Alternative Farming System Information Center (AFSIC) to create an electronically based farmland information storage and retrieval system that is accessible to the public. AFT's research and education facility in Dekalb, Illinois, will administer the new center.

Farmland information centers were authorized by the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981. That committed the federal government to safeguarding the nation's agricultural land resources against unnecessary conversion to other uses and charged the centers with collecting and distributing information on farmland loss and protection.

According to AFSIC Coordinator Jane Gates, the designation of AFT as a Farmland Information Center will aid in farmland conservation and protection "by providing quick and easy access to comprehensive information on U.S. agricultural land resources."

"Having this access will give the farmers, scientists and policy-makers involved in farmland conservation a better understanding of the issue," Gates said.

As a Farmland Information Center, AFT will collect and distribute information on the types, classifications and location of farmland, soils and related natural resources; urban development and growth patterns affecting agricultural land use and its impact on the environment; planning and other tools for farmland protection; and the economic, social and environmental costs of protecting farmland. Founded in 1980, AFT already has a large collection of information on agricultural land resources.

NAL is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and, with the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine, is one of three national libraries of the United States.

NAL's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center was established by Congress to encourage research, education and information delivery about farming systems that preserve the natural resource base while maintaining economic viability. AFSIC provides information on farming methods that maintain the health and productivity of natural resources, as well as that of U.S. farming.

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PUBLIC HEARING IN SEATTLE SCHEDULED ON FUTURE OF MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

WASHINGTON, May 27--Several top U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and members of Congress will participate in a public hearing in Seattle, on Tuesday, June 1, on plans to modernize the federal meat and poultry inspection program.

"The hearing will give the people of Washington state and surrounding areas an opportunity to attend and to participate in this project of immense scope and importance to the health and welfare of the nation," said Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, who directed USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to prepare a USDA plan for reducing pathogens.

"This is especially important in light of the serious outbreak of E. coli in this region last winter. I intend to see that USDA works with all interested groups--including the families of children who contracted E. coli--to make food safer in the aftermath of this unfortunate incident," Espy said.

Senator Patty Murray, D-Wash., who will attend, said holding the USDA hearing in Seattle "sends a reassuring message to the families who were affected by the E.coli outbreak, that the Administration is committed to restoring and maintaining public confidence in our food supply."

Senator Slade Gorton, R-Wash., who will also attend, said, "I look forward to hearing the testimony of the families of E. coli victims, Washington state researchers, scientists, and health officials so that when I return to Washington, D.C., I can begin work with my Senate colleagues on the reform of our nation's food safety system."

Newly confirmed Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Inspection Services Eugene Branstool, FSIS Administrator H. Russell Cross, and Dr. Al Strating, director of APHIS' Laboratory and Epidemiology Services, will take part in the proceedings in Seattle.

Seattle is located in the FSIS Western Region, one of five USDA meat inspection regions in the United States. The region includes the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, as well as American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas Islands. The Western Region has 1,448 federally inspected plants and 1,047 federal meat inspectors. Its Regional Headquarters are in Alameda, Calif.

The Seattle hearing is the second of six such events planned throughout the country to seek public input on the proposed two-track approach to inspection reform. The first hearing was held in Dallas, Tex.; upcoming hearings will take place in Des Moines, Iowa; Oakland, Calif.; Atlanta, and Philadelphia.

Espy said USDA had already sent invitations to attend the hearing to over 400 industry, professional, academic, and consumer groups.

Track I of the FSIS two-track inspection reform plan consists of an immediate program to maximize the performance of the current meat and poultry inspection system. The cornerstone of Track I is a program to reduce pathogens, Espy said. Track II consists of the development of the regulatory program of the future.

Since his confirmation in January, Espy has moved to improve the meat inspection system. He has met with inspectors, consumer groups, industry and a family involved in the foodborne illness in the West; hired 160 new meat inspectors; proposed funding to hire an additional 40 inspectors in the 1994 budget; and directed the start of a strategic plan for meat inspection reform, including a pathogen reduction program that aims to prevent contamination from the farm to table and develop new inspection system based on science.

Espy further has proposed an additional \$8 million in the fiscal year 1994 budget to fund the pathogen reduction program; called for mandatory safe handling instructions on meat and poultry labels in the early days of his administration and will publish proposed rules on care labeling by Aug. 15; proposed collection of \$103 million in new user fees from the industry; and will convene a food safety forum in addition to the six regional public hearings.

At a news conference today, Espy announced the results of a USDA special review, conducted in response to the E. coli outbreak this winter, which showed that 30 of 90 plants were ordered to temporarily shut down to clean up operations (USDA release no. 0417.93). Twelve of the 90 plants were placed under a special enforcement program in which continuing non-compliance would result in the withdrawal of federal inspection.

Espy also announced today five initiatives to upgrade meat inspection: publication of regulations to mandate a process for the industry installation of a Hazard Analysis and Critical Point (HACCP) system; continuation of special in-plant reviews, with quarterly reports, to include all meat and poultry products; publication in the Federal Register within the next 60 days of criteria that FSIS needs for rapid microbiological in-plant tests; inclusion of a public health advisor in FSIS; and a proposal of needed changes in the inspection laws to be ready within 30 days of the final meat inspection regional hearing June 18.

Requests to testify at the Seattle hearing should be submitted to Lynda Spencer in Washington, D. C., at (202) 447-2760. The hearing will be held from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Jackson Federal Building, 915 Second Ave., in Seattle.

Copies of FSIS's strategic plan and the USDA pathogen reduction program are available from the FSIS Public Awareness Office, Room 1165 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) 690-0351.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: *Contact in Seattle is Cordelia Morris (510) 273-6255.*

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Release No. 0421.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

GILLILAND SWORN IN AS GENERAL COUNSEL AT USDA

WASHINGTON, May 27--James Gilliland will be sworn in tomorrow as general counsel at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced.

Gilliland will head the office which provides legal counsel and services to the secretary of agriculture and all USDA agencies.

"Jim Gilliland's legal expertise and extensive contacts with various foreign agriculture departments and Congressional agricultural committees make him an excellent choice to serve as USDA's chief legal counselor," Espy said. "I'm happy to have him with us as a part of our USDA team."

Before joining USDA, Gilliland was senior partner at the Memphis, Tenn., firm of Glankler, Brown, Gilliland, Chase, Robinson & Raines, with which he was associated from 1963 until his appointment. During that time, he was outside counsel to the world's largest cotton company.

Gilliland received his undergraduate and legal educations at Vanderbilt University.

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Release No. 0422.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

MOOS SWORN IN AS UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, May 27--Eugene Moos will be sworn in tomorrow as under secretary of agriculture for international affairs and commodity programs, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced.

In this post, Moos will oversee agencies concerned with international trade, international development, and U.S. farm programs--the Foreign Agriculture Service, Office of International Cooperation and Development, and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

"Trade reform and free-trade initiatives are vital to our efforts to open up new world market opportunities for U.S. farmers," Espy said. "The extensive trade and commodity experience Gene Moos brings to this post will serve him well in leading these efforts."

Most recently, Moos was president of Gene Moos & Associates, a Washington, D.C. consulting firm.

Moos is a former Congressional staffer who served as staff director of the Wheat, Soybeans and Feed Grains Subcommittee, House Agriculture Committee, and senior staff professional of the House Agriculture Committee.

He was an advisor to the U.S. Delegation, Multilateral Trade Negotiations in Geneva, first president and founding member, East-West Trade Council, international trade advisor, National Association of Wheat Growers, and president, National Association of Wheat Growers.

He has 26 years' experience running a family farm.

Moos holds a B.S. degree in agricultural chemistry from Washington State University.



Release No. 0423.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

HAAS SWORN IN AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND CONSUMER SERVICES

WASHINGTON, May 27--Ellen Haas will be sworn in tomorrow as assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced.

Haas will be responsible for managing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, the Human Nutrition Information Service, and the Office of the Consumer Advisor, and is therefore responsible for primary food assistance programs and nutrition education.

"Eliminating hunger has always been a priority for me, and USDA is in a powerful position to help ameliorate hunger in the United States," Espy said. "I am excited to have Ellen Haas, with her years of experience in food and nutrition issues, working towards this extremely important goal."

Before joining USDA, Haas served for over 10 years as executive director of Public Voice for Food and Health Policy, a Washington, D.C.-based consumer research, education, and advocacy organization whose mission is to promote a safer, healthier, and more affordable food supply. She founded the group in 1982.

Haas was director of the Consumer Division of the Community Nutrition Institute, based in Washington, D.C., from 1976-82. She served as acting executive director of the National Consumers League from 1975-76, and from 1973-74, she worked as the director of consumer education for Montgomery County, Md.

From 1973-75 she served as president of the Maryland Citizens Council, which she founded in 1973.

A native of New York City, Haas holds a B.A. degree in history from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.



Release No. 0424.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

SOUTH AFRICA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE WHEAT UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, May 27--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 90,000 metric tons of wheat to South Africa under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in South Africa through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the South African market.

The allocation will be valid until June 30, as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Richard J. Chavez, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



Release No. 0428.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

FOOD STAMP PARTICIPATION REACHES AN ALL-TIME HIGH

WASHINGTON, May 28--The number of Americans participating in the Food Stamp Program in March rose to 27.38 million, an increase of 474,000 over February and the largest number ever, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today.

"As the number of Americans on food stamps rises, it is painfully clear that America continues to struggle to recover," Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said.

"Tomorrow marks the 32nd anniversary of the food stamp program. I know that President Clinton's hope and mine is that as the program gets older, we provide this essential safety-net while we encourage empowerment and self sufficiency. We need to get the economy back on track, put people back to work and reform our programs, such as the food stamp program, to encourage independence from the system."

Ellen Haas, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services, said the March figures illustrate "the extent of hunger in America and the need for immediate action."

Last week, Espy had announced a hunger forum to be held in Washington, D.C., on June 17. The forum is one of a series of seven that will focus on USDA's top priorities. (USDA Release No. 0404.93)

The hunger forum will bring together participants from around the country, including those who experience hunger in their daily lives, farmers, anti-hunger advocates, food industry executives, policy experts, academics and government and community leaders. Espy said the forum will help USDA establish an aggressive agenda to help end hunger in America.

"We can and we must do better as we fight to ameliorate hunger," said Espy.

Food stamp participation has increased by more than 1.7 million people since March 1992, and by more than 4.4 million since March 1991.

In addition, the Mickey Leland Hunger Prevention Act, which President Clinton sent to Congress in April, passed the U.S. House of Representatives yesterday. The bill reforms the food stamp program in order to promote self-sufficiency, makes adequate food assistance more readily available to poor families with children and enhances program integrity and savings.



Release No. 0429.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

U.S. TO DONATE BUTTER, BUTTEROIL FOR USE IN ROMANIA

WASHINGTON, May 28--The United States will donate \$638,000 worth of butter and butteroil for distribution in the Romanian Republic, according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The International Partnership for Human Development, a private U.S. voluntary organization, will distribute most of the 350 metric tons of the butter and butteroil free of charge to hospitals, orphanages, nurseries and kindergartens, and health centers in eastern and southern Romania.

About 10 percent of the commodities will be sold in Romania. Proceeds the sales will be used to pay for internal distribution, storage and handling of the commodities.

The donation will be made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to developing and needy countries. The program is administered by FAS.

The supply period of the donation is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS, (202) 720-5263.



Release No. 0431.93

Robert Feist (202) 720-6789

Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES 1994 WHEAT PROGRAM PROVISIONS

WASHINGTON, May 28--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced a required zero percent acreage reduction program for the 1994 wheat crop. This level was chosen from the statutory range of 0 to 15 percent and is unchanged from 1993.

"Letting wheat growers produce is important in keeping U.S. wheat moving in the world market place," Espy said. "We are committed to being competitive on the domestic production side and on the export sales side through the use of the Export Enhancement Program and other available export promotion programs. Let there be no doubt that the United States will continue to be a reliable supplier of wheat to both our domestic and foreign consumers."

Espy also announced other provisions for the 1994 wheat program:

- The established target price is \$4.00 per bushel, unchanged from 1993.
- A paid land diversion will not be implemented.

Other 1994 wheat program provisions will be announced later.



Release No. 0432.93

Ann Matejko (202) 205-0929

Diane O'Connor (202) 720-4026

STATES ESTIMATED TO RECEIVE \$309 MILLION IN NATIONAL FOREST PAYMENTS

WASHINGTON, June 1--An estimated \$309 million in 1993 National Forest System receipts will be shared among 43 states and Puerto Rico, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today.

F. Dale Robertson, chief of USDA's Forest Service, said receipts are collected from land-use fees and sale of resources on 191 million acres of national forests and grasslands. Federal law requires states to use their share of the receipts for public schools and roads.

"Providing advance estimates of the state payments helps local budget planners complete their work," said Robertson. "The final payments will be based on actual receipts collected and may vary from the estimates announced today."

Interim payments totaling 75 percent of the estimated state shares of national forest receipts will be made in September. The balance will be paid in December, when final revenue figures on fiscal year 1993 are available.

Counties in some of the states also share in the national grassland and land utilization project receipts which are based on calendar year 1993 revenues. Robertson said these receipts will be paid in March 1994.

States received more than \$324 million as their share of 1992 national forest revenues. Counties participating in the national grasslands program received \$6 million in revenue from land use fees.

State by state, the estimated 1993 payments are:

<u>State</u>	<u>Payments from National Forest Receipts</u>	<u>Payments from Land Utilization Fees on National Grasslands</u>
ALABAMA	\$ 1,280,056.52	\$
ALASKA	4,621,250.03	
ARIZONA	5,214,970.86	
ARKANSAS	3,054,226.85	1,000.00
CALIFORNIA */	55,846,229.67	500.00
COLORADO	4,651,786.42	110,125.01
FLORIDA	1,232,756.02	72,000.01
GEORGIA	935,750.02	
IDAHO	16,517,950.35	1,949.25
ILLINOIS	71,225.00	

<u>State</u>	<u>Payments from National Forest Receipts</u>	<u>Payments from Land Utilization Fees on National Grasslands</u>
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INDIANA	\$ 9,963.70	\$
KANSAS		384,081.25
KENTUCKY	609,297.32	25,000.00
LOUISIANA	2,530,000.01	
MAINE	39,142.22	
MARYLAND		5,360.39
MICHIGAN	2,022,075.45	50,500.01
MINNESOTA	2,655,961.39	
MISSISSIPPI	4,228,405.27	
MISSOURI	773,341.77	
MONTANA	12,233,257.11	
NEBRASKA	37,704.50	6,432.50
NEVADA	370,658.64	
NEW HAMPSHIRE	574,330.64	
NEW MEXICO	1,662,330.53	7,768.75
NEW YORK	1,400.04	
NORTH CAROLINA	684,812.58	
NORTH DAKOTA	54.54	2,903,989.00
OHIO	38,717.43	4,046.25
OKLAHOMA	420,628.74	442,611.17
OREGON */	130,826,105.60	6,500.00
PENNSYLVANIA	4,501,629.22	2,750.01
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,342,666.27	
SOUTH DAKOTA	3,657,433.78	98,144.02
TENNESSEE	463,188.97	
TEXAS	3,433,701.01	62,920.34
UTAH	1,676,370.88	
VERMONT	141,731.25	
VIRGINIA	500,754.36	
WASHINGTON */	31,146,278.42	
WEST VIRGINIA	1,114,793.39	
WISCONSIN	860,469.45	

WYOMING	2,157,856.90	335,550.01
PUERTO RICO	16,250.01	
 GRAND TOTAL	\$304,157,513.13	\$4,521,227.97

*/Estimated payments to California, Oregon and Washington were computed under a provision of the Interior and Related Agencies 1993 Appropriations Act. Section 315 of that Act provides for payments to States for Fiscal Year 1993 of not less than 85% of the five-year average payments for fiscal years 1986-90 for those national forests affected by decisions on the northern spotted owl. Estimated payments to these states are higher because of this legislation than they would have been if based solely on actual receipts.

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Program Announcements-

Release No. 0410.93
 Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734
 Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, May 25--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	6.96 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	6.29 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	6.28 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	3.48 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

Loan Gain and Marketing	
LDP Rate	Certificate Rate
.....\$/Cwt.....	

--for long grain:	\$2.03	\$0.35
--for medium grain:	\$1.84	\$0.34
--for short grain:	\$1.84	\$0.34

These announced prices and rates are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made June 1 at 3 p.m. EDT.

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Release No. 0425.93
 Minnie Tom H. Meyer (202) 720-6734
 Leslie Parker (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, May 27--Bruce R. Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. June 3. The user

marketing certificate payment rates announced today are in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, May 28 through midnight Thursday, June 3.

The 6-week transition period from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the AWP calculation is complete. Beginning with today's calculation through July 31, forward shipment prices will be used to calculate the Northern Europe (NE) price, the Northern Europe Coarse Count (NE Coarse Count) price and the U.S. Northern Europe (USNE) price.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the NE price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 86 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 1.15 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	45.17 cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	86
II.	USNE Price	60.00 cents per pound
	NE Price	<u>-58.85</u> cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	1.15 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	58.85
<u>Adjustments:</u>	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55
Average U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	<u>- 13.68</u>
Calculated AWP	45.17
Further AWP adjustment	<u>- 0</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	45.17 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	58.85
NE Coarse Count Price	<u>- 54.25</u>
	4.60
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>- 3.95</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT.....	0.65 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Cash loan deficiency payments for the 1992 crop are available through June 1, 1993. Because the AWP is below the 1992-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments will be paid to

eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1992 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain a loan deficiency payment on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE current price has exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the current user marketing certificate payment rate is 1.92 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1993. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Current Price	NE Current Price	USNE	Current
				Minus	User Marketing
				Current	Certificate
			cents per pound
1	May 6, 1993	62.56	60.03	2.53	1.28
2	May 13, 1993	64.25	60.74	3.51	2.26
3	May 20, 1993	63.60	60.22	3.38	2.13
4	May 28, 1993	62.95	59.78	3.17	1.92

1/ USNE current price minus NE current price minus 1.25 cents.

If the USNE forward price exceeds the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP does not exceed 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period, a forward user marketing certificate will be issued. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for cotton contracted by exporters for delivery after Sept. 30, 1993. The USNE forward price has not exceeded the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks; therefore, a forward user marketing certificate payment rate will not be issued. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Forward Price	NE Forward Price	USNE	Forward
				Minus	User Marketing
				Forward	Certificate
			cents per pound
1	May 6, 1993	62.19	60.50	1.69	0.44
2	May 13, 1993	62.40	60.76	1.64	0.39
3	May 20, 1993	60.80	59.51	1.29	0.04
4	May 28, 1993	60.00	58.85	1.15	0.3/

2/ USNE forward price minus NE forward price minus 1.25 cents.

3/ USNE forward price must exceed NE forward price by 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks before a forward certificate payment is applicable.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rates will be announced on Thursday, June 3.



Media Advisory-

Release No. 0405.93
Brian Norris (301) 504-6778
Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 720-4026

NAL NOW ACCEPTS REFERENCE REQUESTS OVER INTERNET

WASHINGTON, May 24--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library, located in Beltsville, Md., has announced it has the capability of receiving computer requests for reference services.

NAL's reference section accepts computer requests over the Internet telecommunications system. The Internet address to reach NAL is: "agref@nalusda.gov".

Contact: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Library, Room 111, NAL Bldg., 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Md. 20705-2351; telephone (301) 504-5204, Internet: jforbes@-nalusda.gov

NAL is one of three national libraries of the United States, with the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine.

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Release No. 0409.93
Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091
Diane O'Connor (202) 720-9899

U.S. EXPORT GRAIN QUALITY REPORT AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON, May 25--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has released its latest report on the quality of U.S. grain exports.

Published annually by USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, the report summarizes the quality of export wheat, corn, soybeans, sorghum, barley, sunflower seeds, rye, oats, and mixed grain. This year's report is based on data collected during official inspections of export grain shipments in calendar year 1992.

For copies of the report, contact Dana Stewart, FGIS, (202) 720-5091.

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Feature-

Release No. 0414.93
Susan Conley (202) 690-0351
Diane O'Connor (202) 720-4026

USDA HOTLINE OFFERS TIPS FOR KEEPING SUMMER FOOD SAFE

WASHINGTON, May 26--Warm weather means picnics, boating trips, camping trips, and lots of family excursions. But at warm temperatures food poisoning bacteria can begin to multiply on food and could cause illness. No matter what your plans, if you intend to carry food, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers these important tips for keeping your summer food safe.

Use a Cooler to Keep Food Cold

Pack all perishable foods in a cooler. Pack foods directly from the refrigerator or freezer to the cooler. Use gel packs, ice cubes, or blocks of ice to keep the food cold. A full cooler maintains its

cold temperature longer than one that is only partially filled. Pack any extra space in the cooler with fruits, other nonperishable foods, or just more ice.

Use a Plan When Packing Your Cooler

Pack foods in reverse-use order. First foods packed are last to be used. For example, place potato salad, and cheese slices at the bottom of the cooler. Place hamburger patties near the top so they can be easily reached for grilling. REMEMBER, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SECURELY OVERWRAP OR BAG FOODS THAT MAY DRIP OR LEAK, PARTICULARLY RAW MEAT, POULTRY AND FISH. Don't let raw meat or poultry juices touch ready-to-eat foods either in the cooler or during preparation.

Keep the lid of the cooler closed, avoid repeated openings. Take a second smaller cooler just for drinks.

Protect Your Cooler from the Sun

In the car, put the cooler in the passenger section rather than the hot trunk. At the picnic site, put the cooler under a tree or shade with a blanket or beach umbrella.

Keep Hands and Utensils Clean

Make sure everyone washes their hands before handling food or eating. Moist towelettes or wash cloths in resealable bags are good when running water is not available. The primary food handler should be extra cautious about not spreading bacteria from raw meat or poultry to other foods. Use a fresh plate and clean utensils for cooked or prepared foods. Never reuse the plates, bowls, or utensils that were used with the raw product.

Thoroughly Cook Raw Meat, Poultry, and Fish

Hamburger patties, pork chops, and ribs should be cooked until all the pink is gone; poultry should be cooked until there is no red in the joints and juices run clear. Fresh fish should be cooked until it "flakes" with a fork. Remember that rare, or medium rare, meat or poultry can harbor harmful bacteria. Since grilled food often browns very fast on the outside, make a sample cut to visually check for doneness.

Put Leftovers Back on Ice

Put perishable foods back in the cooler as soon as you finish eating. Don't leave them out while you go for a swim or hike. Perishable foods left out of refrigeration for over two hours - one hour when it's above 90° - are not safe and should be discarded.

If you were gone no more than four or five hours, and your perishables were on ice except when cooked and served, you should be able to save the leftovers.



